

# PLANNING AHEAD

Notes for the Planning and Policy  
Community



US Army Corps  
of Engineers

September 2005

Volume 8, Issue 9

## *A Note from the Leader of the Planning Community of Practice*

I came on board here in the Headquarters on 11 July 2005. My first day on the job, I joined our Class of 2005 Planning Associates in Jefferson, TX. You all should be proud of these folks. They are some of our finest. There are only 12, but this is the third class since the program was re-instituted, and our graduates are having an exponential effect on Corps planning capabilities. I was just settling into my position at HQ when Katrina hit, then Rita. Much of the leadership at HQ has been 24/7 supporting the emergency operations associated with these storms. I went from Iraq to flood fighting, but we've now plugged the dikes and drained New Orleans (twice), and I am anxiously moving my attention back to policy and planning. We are all very proud of MVD and how they have performed, and proud of all the great volunteers (approaching 3000) who have stepped up to the plate.

I want to share with you my thoughts regarding the direction of planning and policy in the Corps over the next few years, and seek your feedback. The bullet messages below are based on my experience in the field in the Corps over the last 26 years, input I have received in vetting with our leaders and staff here in Washington, and input from some of our team members in MSC and District offices. I used these bullets to give our graduating class of Planning Associates their charge. These directions are not fixed in concrete, rather they are a work in progress. I sincerely seek your input. Are we close to having it right? Please give us your feedback and suggestions. Send your comments to Harry Kitch or Gary Hardesty. You will find them both on the Outlook's global address book. Thanks to all of you for what you do every day!

- \*Planning will lead the Corps in implementing regional & watershed holistic approach & relationships.
- \*External stakeholders will be partners in all aspects of planning and policy development.
- \*PL & PM will be "band of brothers" leading PDT during the Planning phase
- \*We will continue to mature the Planning Excellence Program, all aspects...capabilities, tools, etc.
- \*We will use cutting edge technology and effective communications to make PL/Pol CoP a reality.
- \*Policy knowledge and expertise will be cultivated throughout planning community.
- \*PL/Pol CoP will be experts in authorization and build associated relationships.
- \*Goals & outcomes of policy review ...the field and HQ will have a common understanding of what success looks like.
- \*HQ reviews will be front-end loaded, integrated, and incorporate one-headquarters.
- \*PL Centers of Expertise will become viable, critical component of Corps capabilities.
- \*Expertise is precious, and will be nurtured and leveraged across regions and the Corps.
- \*Streamlining planning processes will be part of the mission.
- \*We will promote and encourage flexibility and innovative thinking.
- \*The quality of our work and our recommendations will be above reproach.

Tom Waters

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## FEATURED ARTICLES

### ***A Picture is Worth a Thousand Lives***

***JoAnne Castagna, New York District***

We've all seen the images of Hurricane Katrina's destruction - flooded streets, destroyed homes, shattered families. It's these same images that will help rebuild the lives of our fellow Americans in the Gulf Coast.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is using a Geographic Information System (GIS) to create maps that are needed before the Corps can perform recovery efforts in support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other state, federal, and volunteer agencies.

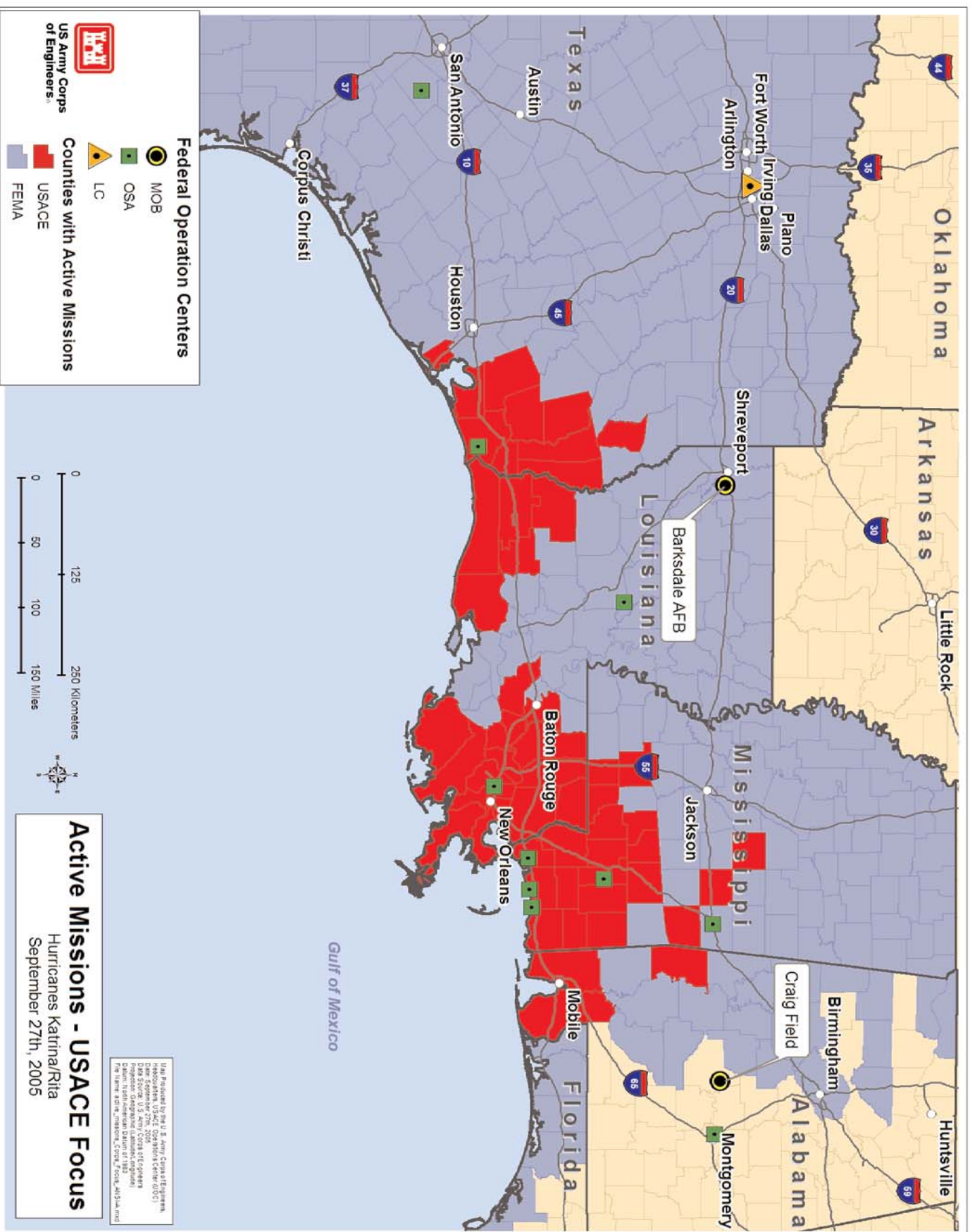
The Corps has over 1,600 employees actively engaged in the recovery efforts throughout Mississippi, New Orleans and Louisiana that includes providing residents' temporary housing and roofing, power, debris removal, water, ice, as well as repairing the levees around New Orleans and pumping floodwater out of the region.

"The region needs to be mapped out first before these recovery efforts can begin because the hurricane blew away most of the street signs so rescue teams and recovery teams have no idea what streets they are on," said Stephen Mcdevitt, GIS, USACE, New York District, who is one of three national action officers responsible for deploying and managing GIS teams throughout the disaster region.

Maps can be created using a GIS, a computer-based information system and analytical tool. Mcdevitt said, "The GIS takes data from various sources, including aerial photography, flood zones and demographic data, and combines these layers of information in various ways as overlays to perform spatial analysis and produce a map which depicts the results of that analysis."

Creating GIS images is the first step to performing recovery efforts that include:

- **Assessing post-disaster damage:** To assess damage, maps are created of the entire region. First aerial photos must be taken of the entire region. These photos are then laid over geographic coordinates and this information is brought into a computer mapping system to create a map.
- **Rescue & recovery:** The GIS teams are gathering data of where hurricane victims are located and feeding this information into the GIS database. This data is being combined with the aerial photography and other geographic data to produce maps that search and rescue workers can use to locate and recover stranded individuals.
- **Building temporary homes:** Temporary housing is only allowed to be created on land that is not prone to flooding, is safe and is in the proximity of services, such as hospitals and schools. Data on the flood zones is combined with other data types to produce maps, which show the best locations for temporary housing.
- **Removing debris:** The GIS maps can show engineers where debris is located. Engineers can calculate how much debris there is from these maps and determine how much it would cost to remove it. These maps can also show where the land is clear. Clear land is needed for "staging areas" to hold the equipment that will be used to remove the debris. In addition, GIS can show engineers the optimal routes for removing and transporting the debris.
- **Pumping floodwater:** The GIS can perform 3-D analysis and modeling, which shows how long it will take for floodwaters to subside, using different rates of pumping. In addition, GIS teams in the field can provide data of where pump stations are located and which ones are working and not working. This data can be used to help figure out how long it will take to pump water out of the region.
- **Identifying impacted communities:** The GIS can create demographic maps that identify what economic and racial groups are impacted the most. These maps can be created by taking hurricane path data and combining this with the aerial images, wind speed data and census data. These maps are used by various groups involved in the rescue and recovery efforts, such as The Red Cross.



Active Missions: Regions where the Corps is performing its missions.





**The GIS Response Team looks over the mapping with a Corps customer at the Baton Rouge La. Joint Field Office. The field office was established in Sept. to provide GIS mapping support to the Hurricane Katrina Corps mission. (Photo by: Jared Andre, GIS specialist, C-K Associates, LLC.**

GIS is one of several tasks that must be initiated immediately when acting on a disaster relief situation.

Mcdevitt said, "Communicate, coordinate and cooperate are the three essential C's for getting things going and accomplishing what you need to in a short amount of time in disaster situations." He suggests the following to engineers faced with initiating a disaster relief mission:

- Plan ahead.
- Create a team of diversified specialists: Many of the GIS team members are non-GIS specialists, but come from other disciplines. These other additional skills can meet the many needs during a disaster.
- Organize and utilize available resources: The Corps called upon existing contractors in order to be able to begin work immediately. "In the beginning we needed to take aerial photography of the disaster and were able to immediately call an existing contractor to perform this work," said Mcdevitt.
- Keep lines of communication open: The Corps has been working closely with other agencies and so far the working relationship has been great and Mcdevitt believes it's due to their frequent communication, "I have two teleconference meetings with FEMA and other federal and state agencies daily."

Mcdevitt said, "There is an incredible variety of ways that GIS can be used to help support disaster missions. A picture is worth a thousand words and if that picture has a lot of useful information on it people do relate to them."

Dr. JoAnne Castagna is a technical writer/editor for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District. She can be reached at [Joanne.castagna@usace.army.mil](mailto:Joanne.castagna@usace.army.mil).

### ***Limitations of and Recommendations for Project Teams in Planning*** ***Alicia Austin Johnson, Northwestern Division***

Results in a Seattle District case study focusing on three project delivery teams, in the planning phase for Section 206 projects, showed team effectiveness or success is limited most by inadequate member involvement. A project team is most effective where all team members are able to contribute in meaningful ways, so that the team's many disciplines are understood, represented, and incorporated in project decisions.

Team members are not as involved in team decisions as they should be. Input by those from planning and environmental resources are frequently weighted more than input from other specialists. This is mainly due to a lack of interdisciplinary understanding. Team members often lack knowledge of how other disciplines can contribute to the project. Some team members did not actively seek input from other disciplines because they viewed them as obstacles to project success rather than partners. Figure one illustrates these main conclusions.

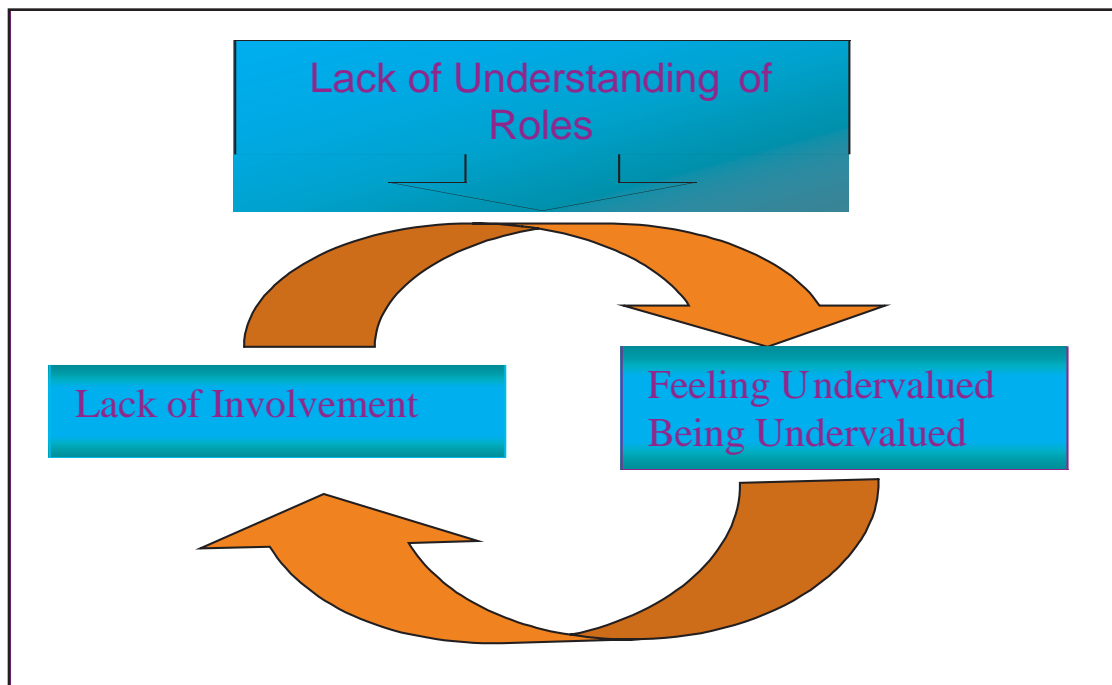


Figure 1.

The study resulted in 10 recommendations to improve team effectiveness, two of which follow:

- 1) Include all disciplines on the project delivery team at the project kickoff meeting, regardless of perceived roles. Allow each member to determine their optimal level of involvement on the project and the ideal timing of that involvement.
- 2) Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each team member at the beginning and what contributions they might make to the project. Allow members to present this information to the team, and have them describe any additional skills he/she has which could also contribute.

For additional information please contact Alicia M. Austin Johnson at 206-764-5522 or [Alicia.m.austinjohnson@usace.army.mil](mailto:Alicia.m.austinjohnson@usace.army.mil).

## PLANNERS IN IRAQ

### ***Corps' Planners Take Their Skills to Iraq*** ***Ken Orth, Headquarters***

Is your planner friend out of the office for the next few months, deployed to Iraq? Whatever possessed them to do that? Are they OK? And just what the heck are they doing over there?

In July 2005 I surveyed Corps' Planning offices to find some answers to these and other questions about Corps' water resources planners who are serving in Iraq. With the help of the MSC Planning Chiefs we identified over forty Corps' planners who have deployed over the past two years. Many of them generously responded to questions about their assignments and were eager to share their experiences. While most of the people I corresponded with happened to be planners,

a few were not. So although this started as a story about planners, the experiences and feelings they conveyed are certainly not limited to anyone's profession or practice. Here is some of what they said.

Much like planners at home, Corps' planners in Iraq represent the full spectrum of professional disciplines in the Planning community of practice. They are planners, project managers, biologists, environmental coordinators, archeologists, economists, geologists, civil engineers, and coastal engineers. Most were stationed in the Baghdad area, but some served in Tikrit, Basrah, and Kuwait. Their tours varied from three to six months.

The reasons for their service have been as varied as their backgrounds. Most listed multiple reasons, frequently including the opportunity to be "part of something important", to better understand what's really going on, for professional challenges and experience, the chance to make more money, and for "adventure", "kicks" and "fun". One went on the advice of respected mentors; another was called to active duty. Others were moved by patriotism, a sense of obligation, or humanitarian reasons. Tara Williams from the Wilmington District called it, "a once in a lifetime opportunity."

## What Are They Doing?

So, what does a planner do in Iraq? For the most part, Corps' planners are making effective and often innovative use of their knowledge and skills in communication and working with people, and in solving complex problems. For example: Karen Berresford, a project planner (now project manager) from the San Francisco District, remembered: "As a planner I inevitably assumed the team lead role. The planning skills of coordinating a multidisciplinary team and managing the big picture were often sought."



**Photograph of me on a site visit (bridge construction project) to the Euphrates River near An Najaf. (Eric Bush, Jacksonville District)**

Eric Bush, a Jacksonville District biologist, "worked as a construction manager on transportation and communications projects...responsible for planning and coordination of transportation projects to be constructed in southern Iraq", including projects for the Basrah International Airport, the railway system, the Port of Umm Qasr, and road and bridge projects. "No one ever said to me 'I'm glad we have a biologist on our team'; quite frankly, I doubt that very many people even knew I was a biologist back home. But a lot of people said to me 'I'm glad we have you on our team'. I think that was because I was able to establish successful relationships and coordinate and communicate issues successfully in order to make progress on our construction projects."

The Los Angeles District's Bill Miller, a water resources planner from the Phoenix Area Office, was an advisor and program manager to the Baghdad Water Authority. Miller recalled that he, "guided the Iraqi staff through a formulation process that resulted in a defensible list of [program] priorities. We then did the formulation process on individual projects, with the final product being a package that justified the project and had everything necessary to begin the contracting process. My job was to be a planner."

Tara Williams, a lead planner in Wilmington, "worked with the Ministry of Irrigation (since renamed Ministry of Water Resources) to develop a database for tracking employment and work completion progress of Irrigation Canal Maintenance for the 'Job Creation Program' (an Ambassador Paul Bremer initiative), gathered estimates for water quality parameter monitoring equipment, and acquired necessary articles for developing ecological baseline study guidelines for marsh restoration in southern Iraq".

As a Water and Sanitation Section Manager, Chris Serjak, an environmental coordinator from the Los Angeles District, oversaw, "a \$500 million budget and 39 major water and sewer treatment projects".

Lt. Dan Haubner, a coastal engineer and plan formulator from the Jacksonville District, was an Assistant Current Operations Officer who "managed the reconstruction and humanitarian aid phase operations of two task-organized Task Units...of over 4,100 personnel."

Paul Rubenstein, an archeologist from the Headquarters, was Deputy Director of the Iraq Mass Graves Team (see Planning Ahead, June 2005). Others served as a Resident Engineer, a Construction Manager, a Project Engineer, a Liaison Officer,



and a Program Analyst.

When asked if any planning-related skills really came in handy in Iraq, most replied "yes" and found that they often counted on many of the same abilities and skills that they used in water resources planning back home. To the Savannah District's Elizabeth Hilliard, an economist, "work in Iraq was not so much different, to some degree, than that of a Civil Works economist in the States. I tracked costs and projects cost, I evaluated data, I performed economics reviews and provided my analysis to senior management, I provided ideas to senior management for cost savings, etc." Derek Chow, a senior project manager from the Honolulu District, relied on the, "analytical thought process of resolving problems and issues."

Eric Bush found that, "most important was the ability to coordinate effectively between and among all of the interested parties. This is essentially what a good planner does." Tara Williams remembered that, "First and foremost, communication skills played an essential role during my entire tour." Chris Serjak said, "Face-to-face meetings are the only way to get anything accomplished in Iraq, so my experience working with public officials as a planner came in handy."



**I am holding \$900K with Ibrahim Mustafa (Deputy Mayor of Technical Affairs) to support water and sewer improvements. (Bill Miller, Los Angeles District).**

## **Dangers and Rewards**

Most planners acknowledged the dangers of working in Iraq. Bill Miller reported being, "on a bus that was the target of an IED (improvised explosive device). Twice I was awakened by the sound of rockets striking the hotel I lived in." But most saw far less. "Once or twice I experienced some fear", said Karen Berresford. "I was situated on a base and I only ever left the base to go to the Green Zone on occasion. This meant that I was relatively safe. The first two weeks were a little hairy as I got used to the sound of mortars and small arms fire."

What did they miss back home? Bill Miller spoke for most, writing: "More than anything, I missed my family. My son spoke his first words and learned to walk while I was gone. I also missed simple freedom. We take for granted that we can get up and drive across town or go for a walk; you don't do that in Iraq." Others missed their pets, down time, temperatures under 130 degrees, and sleeping in their own bed. Derek Chow missed, "My daughter, sushi, and surfing."

Few planners said they would make any changes if they could do their tour over again. One would stay longer; another would take a different job. Two would spend more time interacting with Iraqis and learning to speak Arabic.



**Tracy Grimberg (third from left) with office mates by the front of the Basrah Camp on the Basrah Airport compound. (Tracy works for Huntington District.)**

Eric Bush summed up what many planners said was the most satisfying and rewarding part of their tour. "In general, meeting and interacting with Iraqis. They really are a kind and generous people, and everyone I met was sincerely grateful for U.S. and multi-national efforts to build and rebuild their war torn and neglected country." Others, like Paul Rubenstein, cited their ability to make a difference. "Clearly, and without question, the most rewarding aspect of the tour was my contribution to work that would make a difference in people's lives for a long time to come...[to] bring some peace to the victims of these crimes as their remains and belongings are repatriated to family and friends." Similarly, Bill Miller said, "I know I made a difference. There were more Iraqi citizens that are drinking clean water when I left than when I arrived." Tracy Grimberg, from the Huntington District, offered: "I can say the highlights of my time there would include all the people I met, the meetings in Baghdad, seeing the Gardens of Babylon, Ur, and a palace in Basrah, and last but not least riding a camel." Tara Williams called

her tour, "the best experience I have ever had thus far in my life."

### Thinking About Going?

When asked for advice for others who are thinking about deploying, Eric Bush noted: "This really is an opportunity to be involved in something of monumental importance in a place that is literally the cradle of civilization. It will broaden your perspective on the world." And, Chris Serjak cautioned: "Expect things to be completely different from preconceived notions you may have and expect things to change often. You will get stuck in transit, you will work in less-than-perfect conditions, people will be difficult to get along with, it will be hot/cold/dusty or otherwise uncomfortable, and people may be shooting at you. Deal with it. If you're not the kind of person who can deal with these things, don't go. If you can handle these things, deploying can be very rewarding."



**Tara Williams at Karbala MolR District Office. (Tara works for Wilmington District.)**

Finally, Paul Rubenstein eloquently offered the following thoughts, also expressed by many of his fellow planners:

*First, don't go unless you have the complete support of your family. My wife and daughters were entirely supportive and without that I couldn't have lasted through the experience. In many ways, the deployment is harder on those left behind so be very considerate of your loved ones' feelings and concerns. Second, recognize that no matter what your job is or where you will be stationed, you are going in harm's way. It is important to know that your movements and activities will be severely limited and constrained due to security concerns and the need for safety. The days of strolling through Iraqi markets or having meals at local eateries are largely over. Third, be realistic about the work regimen. Ten hour work days were the rule and our daily routine was work, work and more work broken by meals, a few hours to email or watch a movie and sack time. Sundays off were rare and there were no holidays. BUT, it will likely be the hardest job you will ever love, and the people you work with will be friends for life.*

The heartfelt messages from those who responded to my questions about their service in Iraq show that planners have much to contribute. Many abilities and skills from water resources planning at home are readily useful in meeting the challenges faced in Iraq. Conversely, most who have gone found their service professionally and personally more than rewarding. As Bill Miller put it, a tour in Iraq is, "a once in a lifetime experience that has the potential to change your view of the world and your place in it."

If you're still wondering what your planner friend is doing in Iraq, ask Priscilla Perry, Chief of Regional Planning in Los Angeles and deployed to Gulf Regional District in Baghdad from August-December 2004. She'd say: "I have heard some people in Planning say 'What can I offer because I am not an engineer'. I say, if you know that you are a good planner and you can lead a team through project completion then you have a lot to offer in Iraq."



**Look who's sitting in Saddam's tub now...Derek Chow! (of Honolulu District)**

Thanks to the following for their service and contributions to this story:

Karen Berresford, San Francisco District  
Eric Bush, Jacksonville District  
Derek Chow, Honolulu District  
Tracy Grimberg, Huntington District  
Dan Haubner, Jacksonville District  
Elizabeth Hilliard, Savannah District  
Bill Miller, Los Angeles District  
Priscilla Perry, Los Angeles District  
Robert Sanders, Alaska District  
Chris Serjak, Los Angeles District  
Paul Rubenstein, Headquarters  
Tara Williams, Wilmington District  
Anonymous contributors



## PLANNING ASSOCIATES UPDATE

Ever wonder what the PA's are doing when they aren't traveling, attending class, keeping up on work back at the District office, or catching up on things at home? Most likely they are working with their fellow PA teammates on a critical think piece project. This year, the larger group of 12 was broken out into 3 teams; team Delta, team Discovery, and team Yin Yang to work on this product.

The critical think piece (CTP) product is the opportunity for the PA's to put into practice all the skills and experiences we have gained throughout our year in the program. The objective of the CTP as identified in our class charter is to identify a significant Corps issue and propose recommendations that would advance the Civil Works mission, however, it is not a research paper. During their time in D.C., the PA's were given the opportunity to discuss with Senior Leaders what they believe are the problems and opportunities facing the Corps. This gave the PA's a chance to begin creating a network that will be beneficial throughout their careers when facing the challenges of water resource planning. Each PA team declared their topic back in April 2005 and submitted a 1-page paper describing our ideas.

Then the real work began as we interviewed Senior Leaders, members of the Planning CoPs, other fellow planners, and project sponsors and partners. After several edits and revisions, and a practice session in Anchorage, the final products of the CTP are a 10 to 15-page paper and a presentation to the Senior Leaders and members of HQUSACE on Monday, September 26th.

The members of Team Delta (Patrick Fitzgerald, Mitch Laird, Cathy Shuman and Jodi Staebell) chose a topic on the Planning Communities of Practice. Here is an excerpt describing their CTP: *"How well is the Planning Community of Practice (PCoP) functioning? Team Delta's Critical Think Piece evaluates the status and makes recommendations to further PCoP development and increase its effectiveness. In part, these recommendations address how to retain the institutional knowledge of our expert late career planners, enhance communication and learning, and develop community structure and responsibilities. These recommendations may be of use to all CoPs."*



Team Delta putting in some long hours on their CTP after class in St. Louis.

### Increasing Function and Value of The Planning Community of Practice: Executive Summary

A main component of USACE 2012 is the use of Communities of Practice (CoPs) throughout the Corps. The intent of the CoPs is to leverage the knowledge of the entire community to solve problems while increasing the knowledge of all by applying the expertise more quickly, and building and maintaining that expertise. The purposes and functions of the Planning and Policy CoP (PCoP) to execute the planning missions are:

- Oversee and develop the civil works planning program
- Develop and maintain policy and doctrine
- Promote a capable workforce
- Build and maintain external relationships and coalitions
- Promote communication within the CoP
- Enhance the learning organization

HQ is addressing development of the civil works planning program and maintaining up-to-date policy. Although much has been done on promoting a capable workforce and building external relationships, these areas need additional work. There are significant opportunities to promote communication within the CoP and enhance the learning organization. This Critical Think Piece explores the general level of Corps-wide understanding and functionality of PCoP, and makes recommendations to further its development and increase its effectiveness. Recommendations are also made to clearly identify roles and responsibilities of various components of the PCoP.

#### Recommendation 1: Promote Capable Workforce

The Planning Excellence Program has done much to promote a capable workforce with development of the Planning Core Curriculum and Water Resources Masters Program and revival of the Planning Associates program. These programs do much to build the capability of early- to mid-career planners; however, the Corps is losing the specialized knowledge of our expert late-career planners. It is recommended that the PCoP and Planning Centers of Expertise (PCXs) develop and implement a knowledge retention plan to capture and transfer this knowledge. PCXs would identify the subject matter experts (SMEs). Specialized knowledge of SMEs could be retained through developmental assignments with SMEs, graduate-level PROSPECT courses or specialized training, and dedicated mentoring with SMEs. Development and implementation of knowledge retention plans should be prioritized based on the timing of SME departure and the consequence of losing the knowledge. The Tennessee Valley Authority has developed a knowledge retention protocol that should be considered for implementation by the Corps.

#### Recommendation 2: Promote Communication and Enhance the Learning Organization

Dissemination of planning information through stovepipes is often hit or miss. Additionally the Corps is not realizing the potential of horizontal communication among community members. It is recommended that distribution lists of all community members be developed and that Headquarters use this to directly disseminate information such as new regulations and ECs, training opportunities, etc. to all community members. Communication of lessons learned and innovative solutions could be facilitated through mission-focused virtual meetings at the regional and national level. The PCXs could facilitate the national meetings.

A planning list server should be developed to allow participants to leverage the expertise of the whole community. Regional technical experts and SMEs would be strongly encouraged to participate to ensure the best advice is available. A working CoP calendar could be posted on the Planner's Resource Web site to inform the community of regional and national meetings and other significant planning activities to allow community members the opportunity to participate in the meeting. Rosters that identify community members' experience and areas of expertise should be developed for utilization by members to consult each other for advice or technical review. The Planning Associates (PA) 2005 Class would initiate the compilation of this roster, and personnel at the IWR would compile the national roster.

#### Recommendation 3 – Clarify Community Structure and Responsibilities

HQ has established the four sub-CoPs—plan formulation, policy, economics, and environmental. Activities within these sub-CoPs have been emerging at the regional level with each region developing its own structure. However, most planners at the district level do not know how they fit into the CoP or what the CoP can do for them. It is recommended that roles and functions be defined for all levels of the planning community – individuals, HQ, RBCs, and PCXs.

The role of individual community members is to participate in national and RBC CoP activities, seek and share advice and lessons learned, act as a planning mentor and/or protégée, and subscribe to Planning Ahead and the planning list server. RBCs should organize the regional planning communities, but these should be allowed the freedom to vary their structure. RBCs should identify and maintain technical expertise within the RBC, maintain a roster of all community members, and facilitate the development and management of the regional CoPs. Headquarters should continue to support the Planning Excellence Program, expand the Planning Advisory Board to include a District representative, support Regional Technical Experts and PCXs, and transmit planning information directly to community members. PCXs should establish nationwide teams of planning experts and foster mission-focused communication through virtual meetings. In addition to the above structure, informal sub-Cops addressing emerging missions should be allowed to form and dissolve as needed. For exam-

ple, formation of a Watershed sub-Cop would link planners working on the cutting edge of watershed studies and could significantly advance the knowledge in Corps watershed planning.

### Summary

Full implementation of communities of practice concepts will help us meet the nation's water resources planning needs in an era where the Corps must continually do more with less. Implementing these recommendations would enhance Corps planning capabilities:

- PCXs develop and implement knowledge retention plans to capture knowledge of departing experts
- PA 2005 Class and IWR develop, maintain, and make available a roster of community members with identified area of expertise
- Headquarters utilize a community member distribution lists to disseminate information to the PCoP and sub-PCoPs
- PA 2005 Class develop a list server to access Corps-wide expertise
- HQ and RBC support emerging regional CoP leadership and ownership
- IWR ensure Planner's Resource Web site is up-to-date



Team Discovery working on their CTP during lunch break in St. Louis

Team Discovery (Boni Bigornia, Amy Frantz, Bob Heinly, and Steve Yamamoto) chose for their topic Floodplain Management. Their CTP can be described as follows: *"The devastating flooding caused by Hurricane Katrina serves as a wake-up call to revive Corps leadership and experience in floodplain management. The need for reflection of national policy has never been so clearly evident. Today's Corps leaders have the ability to influence changes that will protect our nation from the terror of flooding. Team Discovery of the Planning Associates Class of 2005 will discuss ways to revitalize a strong, multi-agency effort for reducing the devastating affects of flood events."*

## **Reviving Corps Leadership in Floodplain Management: Executive Summary**

This Nation has recently suffered a great deal of economic loss and human tragedy through catastrophic flood damages. But even prior to Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, the Corps of Engineers, as stewards of a large part of our Nation's flood control system of reservoirs, channels, and levees, has long recognized the need for wise floodplain management practices. Our agency, however, has been bound by limited funding, low priorities, and conflict with the economic growth of land development. We now have a window of opportunity when the general public, local, state, and federal governments also recognize a need for change to our Nation's floodplain management practices. Now is the time for the Corps to act in a leadership role in facilitating this change.

This critical think paper presents the three main areas of change that we believe are the key steps for Corps leaders to implement. Much of the relationship building and communications will take place in the field, but this will require explicit leadership from senior Corps staff, including the securing of funds and reestablishment of technical expertise that is currently lacking.

The three areas that are our focus are: 1) improving the Flood Plain Management Services Programs to accommodate needed studies of floodplains, 2) improving partnerships with critical floodplain partner agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and 3) revising Corps policy and guidance to provide more authoritative tools to the field to allow planning for and in some cases, regulation of floodplains. In particular, EO 11988 and PGL #52, appear to be merely rubber stamps that don't yet allow the Corps to fulfill its flood damage reduction stewardship role. The Corps



has world-renowned expertise in attacking these three complex areas, from hydrologic to legislative experts. We also have clear direction from our Corps Campaign Goals of developing sound water resource solutions (through the FPMS and GI programs), enhancing life-cycle infrastructure management (in partnership with FEMA “before” the flood) and supporting the stability, reconstruction, and homeland security operations (this will be critical in adopting intelligent regulations in rebuilding damaged structures like those in the New Orleans floodplain).

That expertise resides in our world-class workforce, but the leadership role needs to be assumed by three major centers. The Planning Center of Expertise for Flood Damage Reduction (FDR CX), the Planning Community of Practice (CoP), and the Corps Headquarters (HQUSACE) will all need to play roles in organizing the Corps programs and efforts to squeeze the most knowledge and experience from our resources. Teamwork and collaboration is a must in order to create what the nation needs in avoiding, or at least minimizing the tragic losses that we’ve suffered so far. Additional work needs to be done and some of Team Discovery’s ideas have been listed in Appendix A. We look forward to helping senior leadership meet the goals and visions of Corps floodplain management.



The Yin Yang team working over the lunch in St. Louis.

The Team Yin Yang members (Craig Evans, Valerie Hansen, Jenny Owens, Steve Kopecky) chose to discuss Improving Partnerships. Here is what they had to say about their CTP: *"The Corps must improve its partnering capability. The water resource problems facing the nation are ever more technically and politically complex; multi-sponsor, multi-agency, and multi-stakeholder coalitions are becoming the norm. Although the Corps is considered technically competent, it is imperative that we earn our partners' trust by improving communication, flexibility and managing uncertainty. We will provide a 3-year plan to make the Corps a more efficient, effective and reliable partner."*

## Partnership Improvement: Executive Summary

The Corps must improve its partnering capability. It is imperative that we earn our partners' trust by improving communication, increasing flexibility and managing uncertainty. The complex multi-party relationships of the future will require better and more sophisticated communication and increased flexibility in order to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and reliable cooperation. This paper recommends actions that will enhance the Corps' ability to be a more effective partner and describes some of the major obstacles to successful partnership that are within the Corps' control.

The foundation of any good partnership is trust. A partnership is a special kind of relationship, and solid relationships are built on trust. Trust requires competence, consistency, communication, comfort and proximity, according to Ron Zemke, author of “The Confidence Crisis” (Training, June 2004).

We identified three primary areas where improvement is needed:

Communication within the Corps, with our sponsors, and with the general public is often ineffective and inconsistent. Our rigid “one size fits all” policies and cumbersome approval processes interfere with our ability to meet reasonable schedules and our partners' expectations. Unpredictable funding, complex and misunderstood policy, and reviews late in the planning process lead to unexpected results. This translates to high-risk ventures for partners.

A Three-year Action Plan Implementing the recommendations contained in this report will take time. Many of the ideas are not new—some have been partially implemented already. Others will require significant coordination and discussion. The following table identifies key actions that are necessary over the next three years to improve the Corps' partnering abilities:

The Corps must improve its partnering capability. The water resource problems facing the nation are ever more technically and politically complex; multi-sponsor, multiagency, and multi-stakeholder coalitions are becoming the norm. Although

the Corps is considered technically competent, it is imperative that we earn our partners' trust by improving communication, flexibility and managing uncertainty. Implementing the recommendations in this report will make the Corps a more efficient, effective and reliable partner.

Year	Action			
		Communication	Flexibility	Uncertainty
1	Convene Strategic Website Task Force	X		
	Convene PCA Improvement Task Force		X	
	Fully implement HQ Forward & Vertical Teaming	X	X	X
2	Establish & fund a website maintenance account	X		
	Convene a Non-standard Estate Task Force		X	
	Host a National partnering conference	X		X
	Implement HQ-District townhall VTCs	X		X
3	Convene Task Force on delegating approvals		X	
	Develop PM communication tools and training	X		X
	Fund follow-up from partner conference	X		X

Table 1: Three-year Partnership Improvement Action Plan

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### \* Job Opportunities at the USACE Institute for Water Resources

The Institute for Water Resources (IWR) is recruiting for multiple fulltime permanent interdisciplinary positions at the GS-13 and GS-14 levels, and for a fulltime temporary (one-year) GS-15 team lead position. All announcements open on 3 October and close on 21 October 2005. The vacancy announcement number for the GS-13 positions is: **NCFL05810299R**, and the vacancy announcement number for the GS-14 positions is **NCFL05812972R**. The vacancy announcement number for the temporary GS-15 position is **NCFL05813031R**. These announcements are issued by the North Central CPOC, and are open to current Career and/or Career-Conditional employees within the Corps of Engineers. Individuals interested in applying should review the instructions on how to apply contained in the vacancy announcements. For further information please contact Merry Henley at 703-428-7268 or Marguerite Olson at 703-428-9093. Both may also be reached via e-mail.

The positions involve serving as national water resources specialists participating in or leading the development and application of: new Civil Works (CW) planning, environmental, public involvement, investment decision-making, regulatory, or watershed evaluation methods and models; improved planning techniques for water projects, programs or integrated water and land-related systems; new CW policies or procedures for the planning, operation and management of the nation's water resources; special or national studies addressing long range, strategic planning issues or complex water management programs, with some involving international coordination.

Candidates should possess subject matter expertise in one or more CW business areas (such as flood damage reduction, navigation, environmental restoration, water supply, water management, regulatory, multi-purpose projects/systems, etc.), with experience in performing one or more of the following: plan formulation; collaborative planning, partnering and public involvement; economic analysis; social impact assessment; environmental and ecological evaluation; civil works policy development; multi-objective water resources planning.

The Institute's work involves planning and conducting studies; study collaborations across USACE and intergovernmental PDTs; performing policy analysis and state-of-the-art research; preparing study reports, publishing papers, and drafting guidance; applying and infusing the use of new methods and tools in partnership with HQUSACE, MSC's and the districts; presenting study results at seminars and conferences; briefing and advising CW leadership; and serving as instructors at training sessions and workshops.

IWR's main office is located in the Casey Building at the USACE Humphreys Engineer Center, which consists of 580 acres located approximately 19 miles south of Washington, D.C. in Alexandria, VA. The installation is readily accessible from throughout the National Capital Region environs by auto and mass transit. Numerous services are made available to at the complex, including conference and training facilities, federal credit union, food services, an occupational health center and a physical fitness center.

### \* Job Opportunities at Baltimore District

Baltimore District is recruiting for a GS-14 Chief, Civil Project Development Branch responsible for managing the efficient and effective coordination and accomplishment of the Civil Works Planning Program for the Baltimore District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The position requires a broad civil works background and experience; a full in-depth understanding of the Corps of Engineers civil works policies, procedures, and the authorization & appropriation processes; and serves as the primary point of contact for sponsor/customers and other external agencies for the Civil Works Planning program. Announcement should be on the Corps Personnel website sometime in October. Please contact Mr. Robert Gore at 410-962-4900 for additional information.



## PLANNING CoP CALENDAR

**Planning Ahead submission deadline**.....third Friday of every month

**Planning Advisory Board Meeting hosted by SWD**.....October 2005

**Planning CoP Conference**.....9-11 May 2006

If you would like to post an item to the monthly calendar, please contact Monica Franklin at [Monica.A.Franklin@usace.army.mil](mailto:Monica.A.Franklin@usace.army.mil).

## WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO *PLANNING AHEAD*?

This newsletter is designed to improve the communication among all the planners and those we work with throughout the Corps. We hope that future editions will have mostly information and perspective from those of you on the front lines in the districts. We hope that these notes become a forum for you to share your experiences to help all of us learn from each other. We can't afford to reinvent the wheel in each office. We welcome your thoughts, questions, success stories, and bitter lessons so that we can share them on these pages. The articles should be short (2-3 paragraphs) except in some cases where you just have to say more, and should be a MS Word document. We highly encourage you to send pictures to accompany your article.

**The deadline for material for the next issue is: Friday, 21 October 2005.**

*Planning Ahead* is an unofficial publication authorized under AR 25-30. It is published by the Planning Community of Practice, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 441 G Street. NW, Washington, DC 20314-1000

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